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## Module 7

# ART 11



## Interpreting and Responding to Art



**Distance  
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EDUCATION





## **Art 11**

### **Module 7**

# **INTERPRETING AND RESPONDING TO ART**



**Distance  
Learning**

**Alberta**  
EDUCATION

## Cover Photo

Frida Kahlo, 1907-1954, Mexico. *Tree of Hope*, 1946.  
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Art 11  
Student Module  
Module 7  
Interpreting and Responding to Art  
Alberta Distance Learning Centre  
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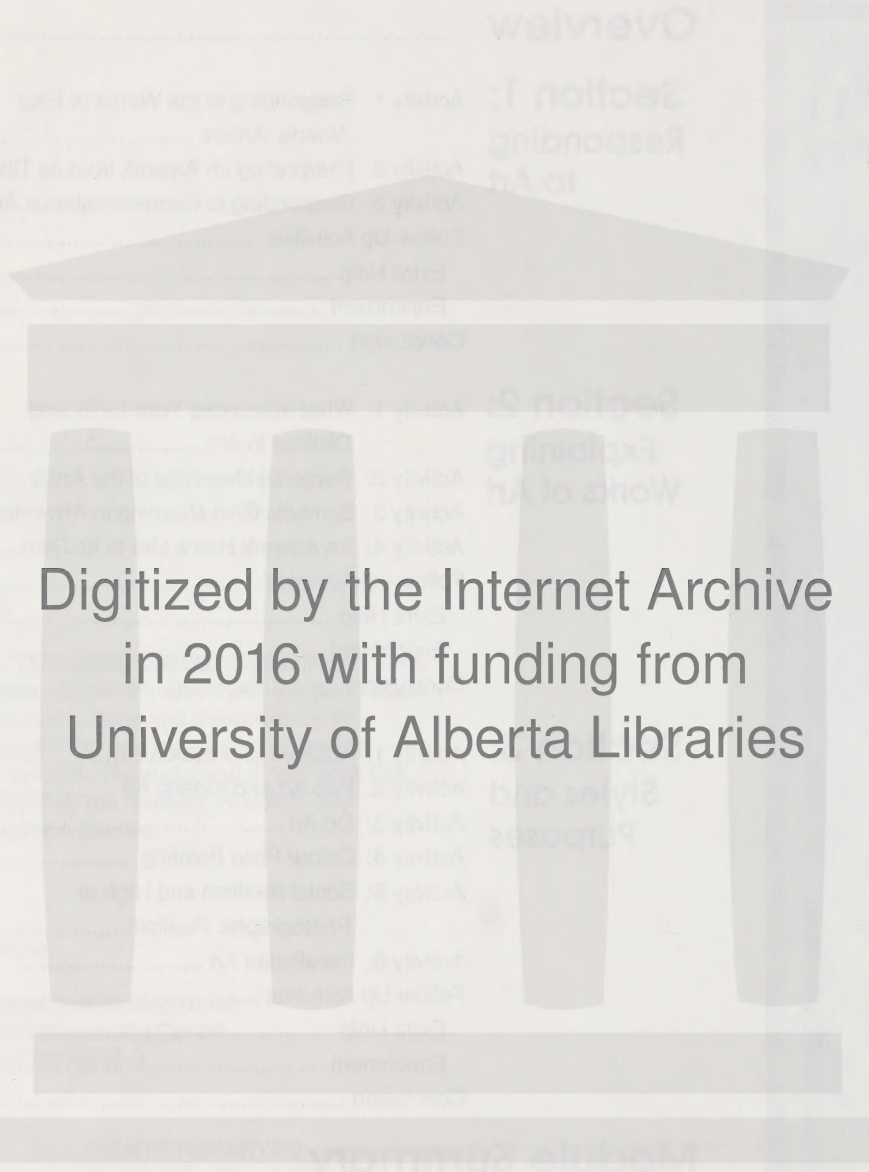
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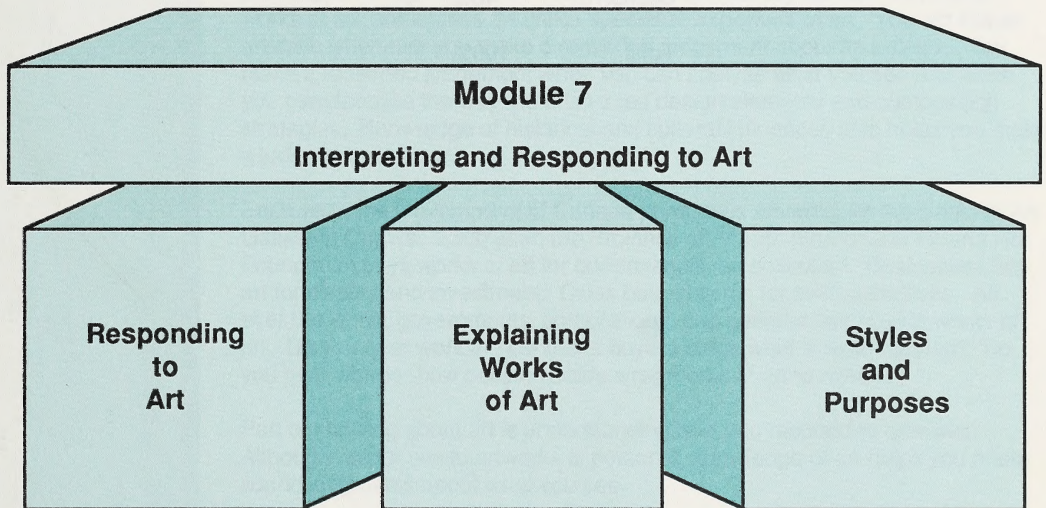
<https://archive.org/details/art1107albe>



# OVERVIEW

In Module 7 you will learn how to analyse your own response to art. Realizing the impact of art on your own ideas and emotions will help you realize the skills needed to interpret works of art.

Contemporary artworks will provide examples of many different styles and purposes.



Module 7 is made of 3 interrelated sections.

## Evaluation

Your mark in this module will be determined by your work in the Assignment Booklet. You must complete all assignments. In this module you are expected to complete three section assignments. The assignment breakdown is as follows:

Section 1	25%
Section 2	35%
Section 3	40%
Total	100%



# SECTION 1

## RESPONDING TO ART

"I don't know much about art, but I know what I like!" Have you ever heard anyone make this remark? When you decide you like or dislike something you are exercising taste. When you judge that someone has "good taste" or "bad taste," you are deciding that what they like matches some standard. In art, standards are set by those who have a great deal of knowledge about art. These people are critics, art historians, curators, collectors, art teachers; all have studied art history, design, composition, and art media and techniques: painting, drawing, sculpture. These people are usually familiar with many works of art; sometimes art critics specialize in periods of art. You act like an art critic whenever you make a reasoned judgement about an artwork. You make a reasoned judgement when you can analyse what you see and when you can describe the way the artist used design elements and composition strategies. Knowledge of historical and cultural influences also helps you make a judgment about art.

Each year, the Government of Canada purchases artworks for the National Art Gallery in Ottawa. Each year, the Province of Alberta through the Alberta Art Foundation buys works of art for our provincial art collection. Businesses buy art for display and investment. Cities buy artworks for civic collections. All over the world, governments, corporations, and galleries are buying works of art. Do you ever wonder how these buyers judge what is worth buying? Do you ever wonder how people decide what works of art to collect?

Part of knowing about art is understanding how you respond to artworks. Although responses to artworks is personal, knowledge of art helps you make sound judgments about what you see.

Upon completion of this section, you should be able to

- apply critical techniques to analysis of works of art
- understand the meaning of "taste" in responding to works of art
- justify your personal preferences for works of art
- understand the effect of personal experiences on responses to works of art





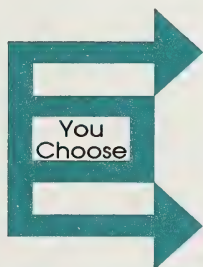
Illustration 133. Alfred Pellán, 1906 – , Canada, *Floraison*, 1946, oil on canvas, 180.4 × 146.1 cm. National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.



## Activity 1: Responding to the Works of Four Alberta Artists

Personal experiences have an effect on responses to works of art. Apply critical techniques to the analysis of works of art.

Look at the four works listed below. All of these were painted by contemporary Alberta artists. Take some time to study the images carefully.

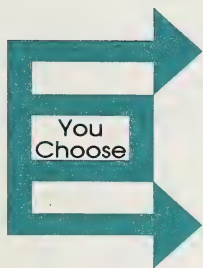


If you have access to the laserdisc *Sightlines*, find and view frame 17235.

OR



Turn to picture 198, Harry Kiyooka, *Sky Scape*, in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*.

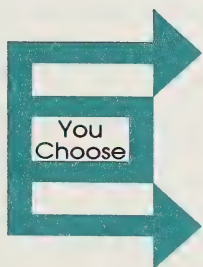


If you have access to the laserdisc *Sightlines*, find and view frame 14244.

OR



Turn to picture 199, Ron Moppett, *Cutting a Rug*, in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*.

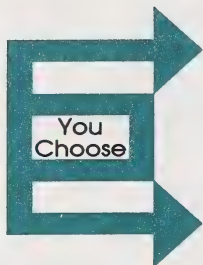


If you have access to the laserdisc *Sightlines*, find and view frame 16504.

OR



Turn to picture 200, Marion Nicoll, *Long Prairie Winter*, in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*.



If you have access to the laserdisc *Sightlines*, find and view frame 15702.

OR

Turn to Picture 201, Peter Deacon, *Aberation 4-5*, in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*.

1. What was your first reaction to each painting? Complete the following statements for each painting.

a. Harry Kiyooka, *Sky Scape*

(1) When I first saw this painting, I noticed

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(2) When I first saw this painting, I thought

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b. Ron Moppett, *Cutting a Rug*

(1) When I first saw this painting, I noticed

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(2) When I first saw this painting, I thought

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c. Marion Nicoll, *Long Prairie Winter*

(1) When I first saw this painting, I noticed

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(2) When I first saw this painting, I thought

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d. Peter Deacon, *Aberation 4-5*

(1) When I first saw this painting, I noticed

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(2) When I first saw this painting, I thought

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2. Look over what you have written for each painting. Now, can you write a conclusion about your first response to these works as a group?

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3. From the four paintings (Kiyooka, *Sky Scape*; Moppett's, *Cutting a Rug*; Nicoll, *Long Prairie Winter*; Deacon, *Aberation 4-5*) select the painting you like the best and answer the following questions:

Title of painting: \_\_\_\_\_

Artist: \_\_\_\_\_

- a. How has the artist used colour in this painting? (Review Module 5, Section 2)

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- b. How has the artist used design elements in this painting? (Review Module 5, Section 3)

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- c. What elements in the work help you recognize the painting as a contemporary work?

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- d. Write the title of the work here:

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How does this title help you to interpret the painting?

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- e. If you could own this work, where would you like to hang it and why would you choose that place?

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- f. Three of these paintings were purchased by the Alberta Art Foundation as part of its permanent collection. The goal of the Alberta Art Foundation is to build representative collections of the best of Alberta art. Which of the three paintings from the Alberta Art Foundation do you like best? Why do you think the painting you selected was chosen as part of such a collection?

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4. From these four paintings, select the painting you like the least.

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Artist: \_\_\_\_\_

Can you explain why you dislike this painting?

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5. Do you think it is possible to dislike a work of art, yet judge the work to be good art? Explain your answer using the four paintings you have considered in this activity as examples.

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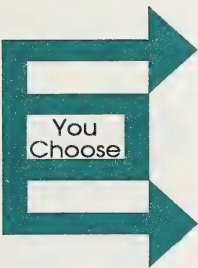
Check your answer(s) by turning to the Appendix, Section 1: Activity 1.



# Activity 2: Interpreting an Artwork from Its Title

The title in nonobjective art can provide a clue to interpreting the artwork. Apply critical techniques to analysis of works of art.

The title of a painting will sometimes give you a good clue for interpreting and judging a work of art.  
Look at *Floraïson* by Alfred Pellán.



If you have access to the laserdisc *Sightlines*, find and view frame 14343.

OR



Turn to picture 172, Alfred Pellán, *Floraïson*, in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*.

The English title of this work is *Blossoming*.

1. Look again at the painting *Floraïson* or *Blossoming* by Alfred Pellán. Consider the title carefully. What images do you associate with the word blossoming? List at least three ideas that the title gives you.

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2. What shapes, line directions, and textures does the artist use to share his idea of blossoming? List as many of the details as you can see.

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3. Try to scan or “read” the painting from the bottom to the top, then from left to right. Try to follow a line, a colour, or shape from edge to edge. Did any part of the arrangement of shapes, lines, or colours surprise you? Identify these surprises.

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4. Make a judgement about this work. *Floraison (Blossoming)* is owned by the Government of Canada. The painting hangs in the National Gallery. Why do you think this work was chosen? (Review Modules 4-5 to help you answer this question.)

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Check your answer(s) by turning to the Appendix, Section 1: Activity 2.

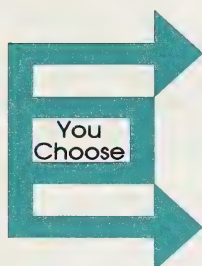


### Activity 3: Responding to Representational Art

Personal experiences have an effect on responses to art.  
Justify your personal preference for works of art.

You have been looking at some nonobjective works of contemporary Canadian artists. Works that emphasize pattern, design, and composition but have no recognizable images are usually classified as **nonobjective art**. Works that emphasize the pattern, design, and composition of recognizable images are usually classified as **representational art**.

Look carefully at the following paintings.

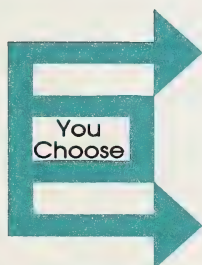


If you have access to the laserdisc *Sightlines*, find and view frame 15917.

OR



Turn to picture 202, Joice Hall, *Celebration Landscape #9 – Mushroom Garden* in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*.



If you have access to the laserdisc *Sightlines*, find and view frame 15813.

OR



Turn to picture 203, Maureen Enns, *Flower Box* in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*.



If you have access to the laserdisc *Sightlines*, find and view frame 17128.

OR



Turn to picture 204, *Dulcie Foo Fat, Red Rock Canyon*, in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*.

1. What was your first response to these paintings? Write your first thought and your first feeling. Can you think of any reason why you thought/felt this way about this painting?

a. Joice Hall, *Celebration Landscape #9 – Mushroom Garden*

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b. Maureen Enns, *Flower Box*

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c. *Dulcie Foo Fat, Red Rock Canyon*

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2. Read over what you have written to describe your thoughts and feelings about these paintings. Can you draw a conclusion about your response to representational works?

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3. As a reward for doing so well in this course, imagine that you will be given one of the paintings you have considered in this activity. The only condition you must meet to receive your painting is that you give reasons for your choice. Your reasons must show a basic knowledge of the significance of the work and of the design principles used.

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Check your answer(s) by turning to the Appendix, Section 1: Activity 3.

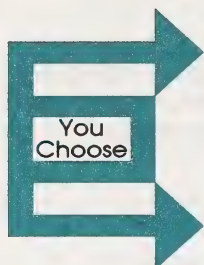
## Follow-Up Activities

If you had difficulty understanding the concepts in the activities of this section, it is recommended that you do the Extra Help. If you have a clear understanding of the concepts it is recommended that you do the Enrichment.

### Extra Help

Contemporary painters may choose to paint about visual problems. They may decide to make nonrepresentational art – exciting and thoughtful patterns, designs and compositions using lines, shapes, colours, and textures without recognizable objects; or, the artists may decide to make representational art using lines, shapes, colours, and textures to make exciting paintings of recognizable objects. Art critics can enjoy and make judgements about both kinds of art. Can you?

Look at the two paintings listed below.

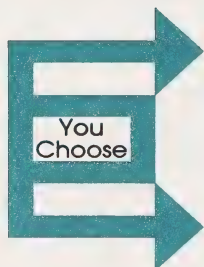


If you have access to the laserdisc *Sightlines*, find and view frame 15920.

OR



Turn to picture 205, John Hall, *Perfume Bottle*, in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*.



If you have access to the laserdisc *Sightlines*, find and view frame 15474.

OR



Turn to picture 206, Barbara Ballachey, *Land Forms*, in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*.



1. What do you see in each painting?

a. John Hall, *Perfume Bottle*

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b. Barbara Ballachey, *Land Forms*

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2. What meanings do you think John Hall added to the *Perfume Bottle*?

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3. What interpretation do you think Barbara Ballachey gave *Land Forms*?

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4. What meanings do you attach to these paintings? List several things in the paintings that produce these meanings for you.

a. *Perfume Bottle*

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b. *Land Forms*

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Check your answer(s) by turning to the Appendix, Section 1: Extra Help.

## Enrichment

Looking at and enjoying works of art is a very personal activity. While you can learn to see more and enjoy more by studying works of art and learning how and why they are made, the final decision about liking a work is yours. You bring your own ideas and experiences to the interpretation of works of art.

1. You have received a birthday card telling you that a painting, *White Door*, will be delivered tomorrow. Do you need to know anything more about the work before you try to imagine what it will look like? Write a description of the painting you imagine.

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Now look at an actual painting, called *White Door*, painted by Derek Michael Besant.

Turn to picture 207, Derek Michael Besant, *White Door*, in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*.

2. What are the major differences between the actual painting and the painting you imagined?

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3. As added enrichment and if *Sightlines* is available to you, look up the artist, Derek Besant, in *Sightlines* (16992, 13083, 15526, 15528, 13082, 15529). Can you make a decision about the way this artist works?



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4. How does this artist use the title *White Door*? Is the title used as a description or as a symbol? Explain.

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Check your answer(s) by turning to the Appendix, Section 1: Enrichment.

## Conclusion

Responding to art, while personal, becomes more enjoyable as you begin to learn to apply your knowledge of art to the interpretation of works of art.

Assignment  
Booklet

Turn to your Assignment Booklet and do the assignment(s) for this section.

# SECTION 2

## EXPLAINING WORKS OF ART

Have you ever been really awestruck by an artwork? Something about the piece impressed you deeply. Where does this power of art come from?

Surprisingly enough, this power doesn't come only from the artwork itself. You and your experiences are an important part of this exchange of emotions and ideas as you learned in Section 1 of this Module. The artist's ideas, intentions, and skills are also essential. The society or culture that surrounds you, and the artist, also plays a part. Lastly, the piece of art itself – how well it is formed, and how well it has been preserved – also influences the impact the image has on you.

In this section, you will be learning more about the influence of these four sources of meaning on your understanding of an artwork: your ideas, the artist's ideas, the culture, and the work.

After completing this section, you will

- recognize some influences on your ability to interpret and to appreciate artworks
- realize that some artists deliberately place personal meanings in their images, and that this affects interpretation
- understand that visual symbols are culturally developed ways of 'coding' meanings
- be able to analyse and interpret some of the effects of preservation and cherishing on the power of an artifact to carry meaning

After shopping for the newest album by your favourite group of four musicians, you are settled in with your headphones on, ready for a great sound experience. How would you react if only one musician of the four came through? After switching a few dials, you now get the drums but you've lost the lead singer. What's going on?! Some meaningful parts of the music are definitely missing.

This full range of experience is what you are looking for as an appreciator of art. Imagine that the “sound track” of the meanings you can analyse or interpret from an image is recorded on four tracks. One track that influences your understanding is your own personal experience or preference for a particular kind of art. A second track is that of the artist's intentions and experiences. A third track is the culture that surrounds and influences both the creator and the viewer. The fourth track is the artwork itself. In some cases, what an image actually “says” echoes across cultures, and resonates through time.

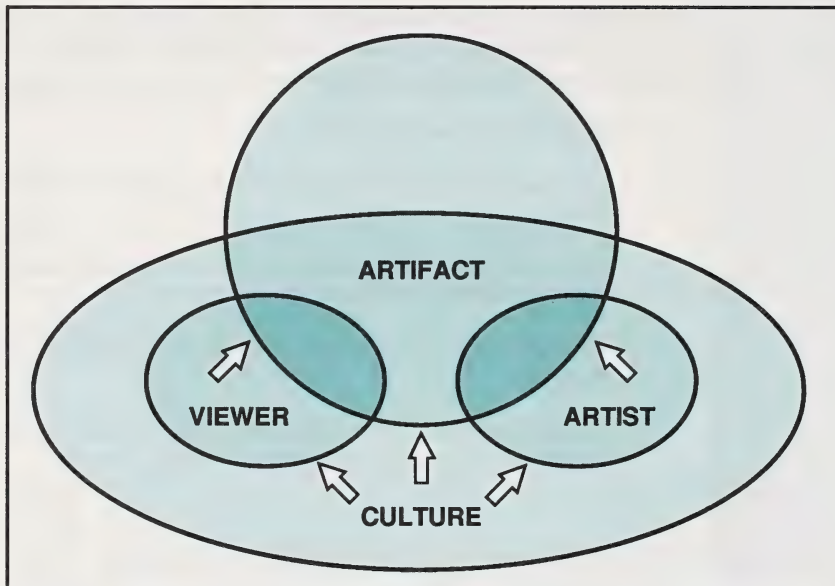


Illustration 134. Influences on how we understand what an artwork means.

Being able to analyse and interpret an artwork in order to achieve the most vivid understanding possible, means being able to think about the work's meaning from different viewpoints: to tune in all four tracks of the meaning-making system.



## Activity 1: What Influences Your Likes and Dislikes in Art

Recognize some influences on your ability to interpret and to appreciate artworks.

Have you ever heard anyone say “I know what I like” – especially when they’ve seen something they don’t like? This statement suggests confidence in personal tastes, or preferences. Throughout this course, you have looked at and studied many different artworks that had the most meaning for you personally – the ones you liked best. In this activity, you will consider the life experiences that influence each person’s understanding of certain artworks. Your own personal experiences increase the possibility of strong responses to some works more than others. You will find out whether or not “I know what I like” might actually be more accurately stated as “I like what I know!” Being aware of different experiences will help you to understand why some artworks are more important to you than others.

1. Think about all the images that you found particularly interesting, exciting, or powerful that you have seen in this course. Concentrate on remembering one of these images. Perhaps it is an image that you have shown to a friend or family member because you wanted to share it with someone. Make a rough sketch using general shapes, and add some details. Label colours that you remember. Can you remember the title? The artist’s name? Include them if you do.

[illegible]

- a. artworks with similar subject matters

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c. the subject of the work in your imagination

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3. Is your preference for the subject matter influenced by your having seen similar images? Why or Why not?

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4. The different cultural groups to which you belong value different things and ideas. Is there a story, a political comment, a religious theme, or some social relationship in your chosen artwork that is also important to the people that are important to you? What subject matter in this work makes you feel closer to a group of people that you care about? Is your selection in harmony with, or in contrast to, your family, friends, and/or community? Do you think they would like the images that you like? Write a paragraph describing the relationship of your artwork to the values of your friends or family.

[illegible]



5. Consider the lines, shapes, textures, colours, and spaces in your chosen artwork. Look for rhythm or repetition, a sense of stillness or movement. You are looking at the visual elements and principles in your artwork.

a. What kinds of patterns and colours do you find in your home and community environment? Describe what impresses you in your visual environment.

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b. Do you think that you prefer your selected artwork because it represents familiar patterns, lines, colours, or because it represents a very different use of these visual parts? Why is this so?

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6. Another influence on your preferences in art is that you have learned something new or exciting about that particular artwork. Describe what you learned when you studied this artwork that made the art more important, more meaningful to you?

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7. **Our familiarity with subject matter, our identification with the subject matter, our recognition of the use of visual parts, and the amount of information we possess about the work influences our perception of an artwork as being powerful or weak.**

Is this statement true or false? Use examples from personal experiences in this activity to explain why you think this statement is true or false.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Check your answer(s) by turning to the Appendix, Section 2: Activity 1.

## Activity 2: Personal Meanings of the Artist

Realize that some artists deliberately place personal meanings in their images, and this affects interpretation.

What is reality? This simple question has intrigued humanity for centuries. Is reality located in the natural world, and in all the objects and environments that we live with? Or is reality located in the mind, because that is where we understand (or sometimes don't understand) our world? Artists, like all people, have different responses to these questions. Their images suggest what they think are the most significant parts of the idea "reality."

Some artists are very interested in their personal experiences and portray the unusual to investigate their inner reality. They make images to show what their "real" world is like. In this activity, you will look at how the meaning of an image is influenced by the personal experiences of the artist.

1. Carefully study picture 208, Marc Chagall, *Birthday*, in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*, then answer the following questions.

a. Could these two people really float? What is Chagall telling us in this painting?

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b. Chagall is showing a personal view of his inner world. Do you need the title to help you know his experience? Does the work suggest enough of his feelings? Describe the clues that helped you to know about his feelings.

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- c. Is this view of Chagall's emotional work so personal that you cannot understand or feel it? Why or why not?

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2. Carefully study picture 209, Frida Kahlo, *Tree of Hope*, in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*. Describe your first impressions of the image using single words, and short phrases.

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3. Kahlo was a passionate human being whose artworks were a direct and powerful expression of her own life experiences. In 1925, when Frida Kahlo was eighteen years old, a train crushed the bus in which she was riding. Over a period of twenty-nine years from 1925 to 1954, she had thirty-two major operations on her spine and right foot. As she said, "I am not sick. I am broken."

Several things in this painting are in sets of two: sun/moon; grave/trench; two back braces (one on, the other carried). These may stand as symbols: life/death; freedom/imprisonment; hope/despair. One seated Frida is watching over the other unconscious Frida, providing protection and care.

Which one is the real Frida? Or are both? Explain your answer.

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4. Frida Kahlo had many devoted friends throughout North America. Culturally, Kahlo was intensely proud of her Mexican heritage (as we see by her clothing.) Artistically, she created many paintings – mostly about her life – and had several shows during her lifetime. *The Tree of Hope* was the painting she used to conclude her last show, at the age of forty-seven. In the painting, one Frida carries a banner that reads (in English) “Tree of Hope, Stand Firm.” This statement was her motto in life.

- a. Who or what is the “Tree of Hope” to Frida? What in this picture suggests where she gets her strength to hope?

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- b. Neither of Kahlo's figures are standing, so what does Kahlo mean by “Tree of Hope, Stand Firm?”

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5. Unlike Chagall's painting, Kahlo's work is disturbing. Her accident caused her much pain and suffering. Kahlo investigates her personal responses to her situation, her own sense of reality.

- a. Can you as a viewer feel, understand, or “take on” the way Frida Kahlo approached her reality? Why or why not? Was there any idea or feeling that you gained by studying this picture of her inner life?

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- b. Discuss how you, as a viewer, can grasp through her art, Frida Kahlo's view of her life as having significance or meaning.

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Check your answer(s) by turning to the Appendix, Section 2: Activity 2.

### Activity 3: Symbols Give Meaning to Artworks

Visual symbols are culturally developed ways of “coding” meaning.

People have always watched the skies. In the fall and early spring, thousands of birds can be seen making their way north or south. The early Roman priests practised the art of telling “auspices”: omens received by watching the flight patterns of birds. Today, if some event looks as if it will go well, we still say it looks auspicious.

Humans have symbols for many ideas: cosmic symbols for the earth and solar system; traditional patterns, magical and religious symbols for dealing with the supernatural. In this activity, you will consider how the bird as a magical, psychological, and natural symbol has had similar powerful meanings for different groups of people.



1. Symbols stand in for something not present. In our contemporary culture, stories, songs, and myths, can be symbolized by the characteristics of certain birds. For example, the bird shown in Illustration 135 is the phoenix, a legendary bird who lived 500 years, burned itself to death, then renewed itself from the ashes. This bird has become a symbol of resurrection. What could the following birds symbolize?



Illustration 135. Phoenix, a legendary bird.

- a. The dove symbolizes \_\_\_\_\_
- b. The hawk symbolizes \_\_\_\_\_
- c. The blue jay symbolizes \_\_\_\_\_
- d. The peacock symbolizes \_\_\_\_\_
- e. The raven symbolizes \_\_\_\_\_
- f. The eagle symbolizes \_\_\_\_\_
- g. The rooster symbolizes \_\_\_\_\_
- h. The bluebird symbolizes \_\_\_\_\_
- i. The loon symbolizes \_\_\_\_\_
- j. The dodo symbolizes \_\_\_\_\_

2. Select two of the birds listed in question 1 plus the raven and describe why you chose the idea you did. List any stories, myths, facts, or sayings that you know about the specific bird as a symbol.

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Look at the following pictures of a real raven and two works of art depicting the raven.



Illustration 136. Photograph of raven (Albert Karvonen of Karvonen Films).



Illustration 137. Florence Davidson. Raven, Haida Ceremonial Blanket, wool/buttons, 191.0 × 128.0 cm. 1975.



Illustration 138. Raven Screen. Japanese, Edo period, c 1650. Pair of six-panel screens. Ink and gold on paper, 61 3/4" × 139". Eugene Fuller Memorial Collection, Seattle Art Museum.

3. Name three real physical characteristics that are suggested in the art images seen in Illustration 137 and Illustration 138.

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Both the Haida people and the Japanese people have traditions that can be symbolized by the raven's cunning, trick-loving, lively nature. The Haida however, saw the raven as the most powerful of all creatures, and used the raven as a symbol of the Creator. The Haida believed the raven was capable of changing its shape into any animal or human it wished. In fact, one of the names given the raven by these people is the Transformer. Haida beliefs gave symbolic power to the raven.

4. Which image presents a bird that can symbolize the Transformer? Identify at least two specific visual elements that help the artifact convey a sense of spiritual or magical power to you. Remember, the qualities of cunning and action may also be present in this image.

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5. Discuss how the other image suggests a more psychological symbolism. That is, what style characteristics or compositional structures help to capture a sense of the raven as cunning, tricky, clever, and active?

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6. Study the image of the real raven. Make some sketches of it, using loose lines and emphasizing details. Select 2 or 3 of your best raven drawings. Use tracing paper. Copy these drawings over 10 times (you might overlap at times.) Try to achieve an active composition. Use black felt pen to emphasize contrast and outlines. The collective term for a flock of crows is a murder of crows (like a gaggle of geese). Invent a collective term that suggests cunning, wit, and action. Title your flock of ravens.

**Put your final drawing here.**



# The Art of SURVIVAL



## Canadian Artists in Aid of Endangered Wildlife

Sponsored by:



CANADIAN  
NATURE  
FEDERATION



FEDERATION  
CANADIENNE  
NATURE



Environment  
Canada

Environnement  
Canada

WILDLIFE HABITAT  
CANADA

Illustration 139, Brochure for Canadian Artists in Aid of Endangered Wildlife. Painting of whooping cranes, entitled *Hope*, used with permission of the artist Tony Chelsom.

Birds can be used as symbols of a whole species. For example, the bird as a natural symbol has been used in both the United States and Canada by groups trying to promote the conservation of the wetlands for all migrating wildfowl.

Since 1929, in the United States, laws and funds raised by conservation groups have allowed the purchases of huge pieces of land so that the birds will continue to have safe places to rest, eat, and rear their young. Often, migrating waterfowl travel thousands of miles every year and so require special stopping places where they are safe from harm and where they cannot destroy farm crops. These stopping places are the wetlands.

A group called *Ducks Unlimited* was organized to help raise money to save the wild fowl migrating to the wetlands. Every year, wildlife artists across North America send in paintings and drawings to Ducks Unlimited. One work is selected each year, and that image is placed on sale – as a stamp – by the U.S. post office. The money raised goes to Ducks Unlimited to help in the fight to preserve the wetlands.

Ducks Unlimited Canada in Alberta and the Alberta Fish and Wildlife Division launched the Alberta Art Stamp and Print Program in 1989. It mirrors a similar fund-raising technique that is used by Ducks Unlimited in the United States. The funds raised go toward wetland and upland habitat development projects carried out by Ducks Unlimited. The competition is open to any Alberta resident artist who wishes to support Ducks Unlimited Canada while competing for the opportunity to expose their talents to a wider audience.

Study the following image of a painting (Illustration 140) that has won and been printed.

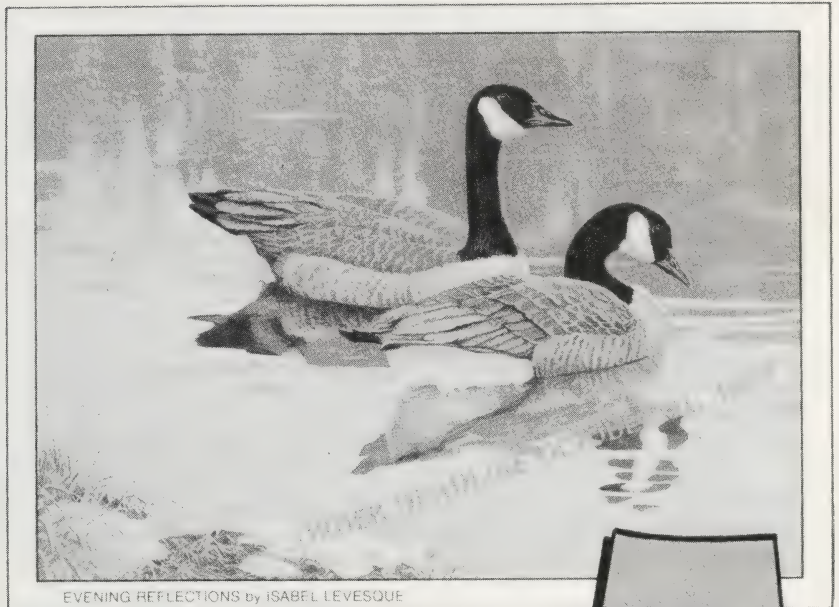


Illustration 140. Ducks Unlimited Canada.

7. What is the style of this painting? Realistic or abstract?  
Why is this? Does this increase the power or impact of the  
message of the artwork? How?

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Ducks Unlimited Canada



Alberta Fish and Wildlife is pleased  
to cooperate with Ducks Unlimited  
Canada in releasing this Alberta Bird  
Game Conservation Stamp and Print.

Check your answer(s) by turning to the Appendix, Section 2: Activity 3.

## Activity 4: An Artwork Has a Life of Its Own

Analyse and interpret some of the effects of preservation and cherishing power of an artifact.

Once an artwork is created, it has a life of its own. Many different people see it; it often hangs in different places, and it survives changing conditions of handling and light.

People cherish works for different reasons. Only a few people may know a painting that is made for you by a family member, but you may treasure it all your life. On the other hand, you may be very proud of the variety of artworks created by native people in Canada, and yet you rarely are able to see any of these works firsthand.

Both the painting and the native artworks are loved for different reasons. Where they are placed, and who sees them are differences in their treatment. The treatment of artifacts raises another set of questions related to how we can get at what an artwork means to different groups of people.

1. In which of the following buildings, Illustration 141, or Illustration 142, would you expect to find artworks, well cared for, properly lit, informatively labelled, and favourably displayed?



Illustration 141. National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa. Canapress Photo, D. Roitner, photographer.





Illustration 142. Greyhound Bus Depot, Edmonton.

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2. Just as the old saying “never judge a book by its cover” says, it is difficult to guess the worth or value of something from the outside. However, when a building is designed for some specific purpose, we should expect that this purpose will be fulfilled efficiently and effectively. A National Gallery does what the word *National* implies. Works made by Canadians since early times are collected here. Works made by people from all across the country are shown here.

A bus depot is also made for a certain purpose. Imagine you are on a stopover at the bus depot. Upon entering the coffee shop, you are surprised that there are many reproductions of art hung on the walls, and some original paintings and sculptures are placed throughout the building.

- a. Why do you think art is collected by the National Gallery of Canada? Who sees these works?

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- b. What are some of the reasons that someone working at the bus depot might have for putting up a collection of artworks? Who sees these works?

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- c. Are there possible differences in the subject matter and styles of work that you might see in the National Gallery or the bus depot? Why or why not?

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3. The act of keeping art in top-notch condition is called **preservation**. For example, washing your hair with shampoo helps to preserve your healthy hair. People at the National Gallery don't wash art with shampoo, of course, but they do follow special procedures such as proper use of lighting and temperatures to help lengthen the amount of time an artwork will survive. Can you think of some of the things the people at the bus depot could do to care for their collection of art?

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4. Every once in a while, you get a haircut to restore the original shape of your hair style. Sometimes, too, valued pieces of artwork wear out: The fabric of weaving frays, or a canvas begins to weaken, or the glazes (paint coatings) on a painting begin to discolour. Restoration is the process of putting art back into its original good condition. Can you think of some possible reasons for restoration?

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A famous restoration case is that of Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel ceiling **fresco** in Italy. After years of testing suitable cleaning materials, and years of debate about whether it should be cleaned at all, the restoration got under way. You can now see the colours as bright and as vivid as they were when Michelangelo first painted this fresco.

Yet, some people still feel that the natural and chemical aging effect are also part of an artwork, and serve to remind us that all things in life are temporary.

5. A mural about the community's history was painted on the side of the bus depot to celebrate Canada's centennial year in 1967. Since then, the colours have faded, some of the stucco surface has chipped and some vandalism and graffiti has destroyed the power of the mural to delight people, and make them proud of their heritage. List all the reasons you can think of (both for and against) for getting this mural restored. Conclude by telling what your decision would be.

[illegible]

Check your answer(s) by turning to the Appendix, Section 2: Activity 4.

## Follow-Up Activities

If you had difficulty understanding the concepts in the activities of this section, it is recommended that you do the Extra Help. If you have a clear understanding of the concepts it is recommended that you do the Enrichment.

## Extra Help

1. Carefully study picture 210, Rosa Bonheur, *The Horse Fair*, in your Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions, then answer the following questions.
  - a. Have you ever seen a real-life scene like the one in *The Horse Fair*? If so, where?

- a. Have you ever seen a real-life scene like the one in *The Horse Fair*? If so, where?

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- b. What were three things that you saw that looked the same in your real experience as in this painted picture? (If you have had no such experience, think about photographs of horses.)

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- c. Because of your own experiences, both in real life and through photographs or movies, do you think this scene is believable? Why or why not? Do you care about art that shows you something you know exists? Why or why not?

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2. Rosa Bonheur studied horses in the stockyards outside Paris. She knew horses well, and so was able to paint them both dramatically and realistically in this painting. If you spread your arms straight out at your sides, this painting is almost four times wider than that distance. Imagine standing in front of this painting.

- a. What sounds and actions seem very clear to you?

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- b. What design elements and principles did the artist use to create the illusion of action?

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- c. Bonheur intended the size to add to the power of her image. Compare your impressions of the small reproduction to your estimation of the large original.

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Check your answer(s) by turning to the Appendix, Section 2: Extra Help.

## Enrichment

You have recently been appointed a member of a local art acquisition committee. This committee has the confidence of the local community because of the exciting variety and quality of the artworks purchased by the committee.

These artworks can be seen around town in public settings such as large lobbies, parks, theatres, auditoriums, and sports centres. Your first responsibility is to review two artworks for the purpose of recommending the purchase of one for the entrance lobby of the new Community Leisure Centre.

You are very pleased about reviewing these works because you recognize both Canadian artists' names and know that they are widely respected. After you have completed your analysis and interpretation of the works, your committee wants you to recommend one for purchase.

In this activity, you are to use your own community, and your own abilities as an art appreciator to complete this written recommendation. Examine all possibilities. Be as specific and descriptive in your writing as you can. Remember, you want to show your committee that you have considered the artworks carefully, so that they will respect your recommendation.

Look at the following two artworks closely and consider the catalogue information that has been sent to you.





If you have access to the laserdisc *Sightlines*, find and view frame 14343.

OR



Turn to picture 172, Alfred Pellán, *Floraïson* in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*.

Turn to picture 211, Jessie Oonark, *Untitled* wall hanging in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*.

## Catalogue Information

### Jessie Oonark

Jessie Oonark (1906-1985) was a respected Inuit image maker. Her works incorporated traditional themes of the Inuit people – the birds and animals of the North, as well as many images of the spirit world and the human world of work and play. Oonark's artworks show a strong appreciation for the relationship between the natural and the human world. As well as showing this combined sense of spirit, Oonark's works share a joyful expression of life experiences. Colours and shapes are vivid, and forms placed so as to create a sense of time passing, and timelessness. Though fabric is a relatively recent material for Inuit people, Oonark has used the qualities of embroidery and felting to full advantages by using colour contrasts, detail, and texture to develop a varied and complex wall hanging.

### Alfred Pellán

Alfred Pellán (1906-) was a source of inspiration for many Quebec artists. His works incorporated ideas about the dream world and about imaginative situations. Pellán helped many artists consider new and spontaneous ways of making art images. Much of Pellán's artwork may be called abstract, in that he often simplified real objects or people in the work or just used areas of colour to suggest shapes. He concentrated on sharing the visual joy he experienced in the dynamic and rhythmic arrangements of colours, shapes, and patterns. Pellán's use of light and dark values, and playful placement of details and lines create a sense of depth in his artworks. Often, his grouping of certain **biomorphic** or geometric forms suggest forms growing in space. Pellán's *Floraïson* (*Blossoming*) conveys this vitality and his delight in the variety of imagined realities.

To: Art Acquisition Committee  
Community Leisure Centre  
\_\_\_\_\_, Alberta

1. I have considered these works carefully, and my first responses were

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2. I am aware of all the factors we must consider before making a selection; I thought I would start off by describing my personal preferences in artworks. I would like to describe how my previous art experiences, my taste in subject matter, my response to visual elements like colour, and any friends and family art preferences that have possibly influenced my responses.

[illegible]

3. An important consideration in appreciating the meaning of an artwork is to try to determine the artist's motivation. I read the catalogue carefully, and have looked at the pictures of the artworks thoroughly. I think that each of the artists was trying to express ideas about the following:

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4. Both the untitled wall hanging and the oil painting, *Floraison* or *Blossoming*, are colourful works. However, they are designed in very different ways, and they are about different subject matters. I would like to analyse four visual elements and principles at work in each image. I will conclude by describing my interpretation of what I think each work is all about.

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5. From what I have read, these two artists represent very good examples of two different groups in our Canadian culture. As a prairie person, and as a member of our community which is made up of different ethnic and racial peoples, I think we could appreciate each of these works for the following reasons.

[illegible]

6. After seriously considering all the ways that each of these artworks can be appreciated, I would like to recommend the purchase of \_\_\_\_\_ for the following four reasons:

[illegible]



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Yours sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_ Committee member

Check your answer(s) by turning to the Appendix, Section2: Enrichment.

# Conclusion

Your ability to interpret and to appreciate art works depends on knowledge and experience. As you see more works of art, you will become accustomed to the changes in style and materials; as you learn more about artists and art, you will begin to understand that the visual symbols that artists use are codes of meaning.

Assignment  
Booklet

Turn to your Assignment Booklet and do the assignment(s) for this section.

# SECTION 3

## STYLES AND PURPOSES

The Second World War almost destroyed the European art world. Paris lost its position as the art centre of the world with the occupation by the German forces. Many artists had fled from European cities to New York City. Within a short time, New York became a very cosmopolitan and universal art centre, and has retained that position to this today.

European abstract painting and expressionism were powerful influences on North American contemporary art styles. Before the Second World War, many North American artists studied and worked in France and were familiar with new trends and the innovations of James Whistler, John Marin, Mary Cassat, Paul Emile Borduas, and Maurice Cullen.

The fifties, sixties, and seventies saw many artistic changes. Practising the freedom allowed for individual expression, North American artists experimented with different ideas and subjects, developing and establishing unusual personal styles and techniques.

In this section you will study a variety of artworks from 1950 to the present. The range, variety, styles, and purposes of artworks have undergone many changes in this period, but nowhere has the change been as rapid as in our North American western culture. You will become more familiar with such styles as Abstract Expressionism, Pop Art, Op and Kinetic Art, Colour Field Painting, New Realism, and Installation Art. Even though these art forms differ from traditional artworks, the basic purposes of creating art did not change, only some of the methods did.

When you have finished this section you will

- realize that contemporary art styles coexist with traditional art styles
- recognize contemporary art styles
- understand that freedom of expression is necessary for contemporary artworks
- understand the impact of technology in the creation of contemporary art forms

WHY, BRAD DARLING, THIS PAINTING IS A  
MASTERPIECE! MY, SOON YOU'LL  
HAVE ALL OF NEW YORK CLAMORING  
FOR YOUR WORK!

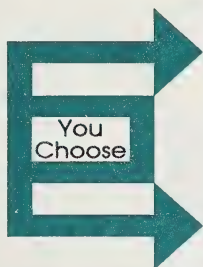


Illustration 143. Roy Lichtenstein, 1923 – U.S.A., *Masterpiece*, 1962, oil on canvas, 138 × 138 cm. Collection of Leo Castelli, Inc. ©Lichtenstein 1990 VIS\*ART. Copyright Inc.

## Activity 1: Abstract Expressionism

Contemporary styles coexist with traditional style. Learn to recognize contemporary art styles that originated in North America.

**Abstract Expressionism** stresses emotions and personal feelings in an artwork. Some contemporary artists abandoned all forms of realistic representation and elements of formal design. Willem de Kooning immigrated to the United States from Holland, discarded his realistic painting style, and began to fill large canvases with seemingly uncontrolled slashing brush strokes. His work looks spontaneous. The emphasis is on the act of painting, as part of the subject matter. For this reason these works are called **Action Paintings**.



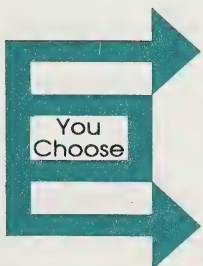
If you have access to the laserdisc *Sightlines*, find and view frame 9357.

OR



Turn to picture 212, Willem de Kooning, *Asheville*, in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*.

Module 6 introduced you to some works of Jackson Pollock. Pollock did not use brushes, but dripped and spilled the paint onto the canvas which was placed on the floor. Over the painting, he built a scaffold, so that he could walk around and above the painting and so control the direction and application of the paint from many directions.



If you have access to the laserdisc *Sightlines*, find and view frame 9549.

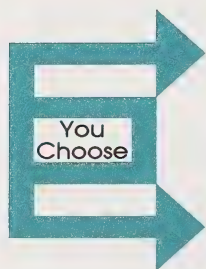
OR



Turn to picture 175, Jackson Pollock, *One* (#31, 1950), in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*.



The Canadian artist, Jean-Paul Riopelle, created his compositions by slashing and working the paint with a palette knife.



If you have access to the laserdisc *Sightlines*, find and view frame 15310.

OR



Turn to picture 215, Jean-Paul Riopelle, *Untitled*, in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*.

After you have carefully looked at these paintings, answer the following questions.

1. What kind of surface has been created?

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2. What features of these images suggest action painting?

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3. How is unity created in these compositions?

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4. Give some reasons why these paintings are unlike the paintings that depict realistic subject matter.

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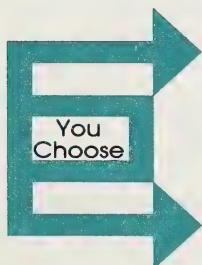
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Check your answer(s) by turning to the Appendix, Section 3: Activity 1.

## Activity 2: Pop Art and Kinetic Art.

Learn to recognize contemporary art styles. Freedom of expression is necessary for contemporary artworks.

A number of artists began working with the popular subject matter of everyday North American objects such as soup cans, comic strip characters, pop bottles, or hamburgers. These artworks are called **Pop Art**. The artist Andy Warhol focussed on the mass production of images of retail products and painted many examples of such series. You will recall the images of the Campbell soup can in neat and orderly rows, just the way you would see them on the grocery store shelf. Look also at the *Green Coca Cola Bottles*.



If you have access to the laserdisc *Sightlines*, find and view frame 11511.

OR



Turn to picture 190, Andy Warhol, *Campbell Soup Can*, in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*.



If you have access to the laserdisc *Sightlines*, find and view frame 11509.

OR



Turn to picture 214, Andy Warhol, *Green Coca Cola Bottles*, in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*.

Another artist, Roy Lichtenstein, also commented on our consumer society. He chose as his subject the slick multiple reproduced images of cartoon illustrations. These images were increased to large size paintings by Lichtenstein.

Turn to picture 213, Roy Lichtenstein, *Masterpiece*, in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*.

1. List at least ten other consumer items that could become the subject matter for a painting.

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2. Why do you think these artists used popular items from our North American culture as subject matter?

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3. What specific reason can you give for naming the work by Lichtenstein, *Masterpiece*?

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4. Would you want either of these works for your room? Explain why or why not.

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Check your answer(s) by turning to the Appendix, Section 3: Activity 2.

Mobile sculptures are a form of **Kinetic Art**. Kinetic means active or lively. Forms in these sculptures move with the lightest air current. Every move produces a change in the overall visual effect. Alexander Calder was among the first of the American sculptors to work with abstract forms in air space.



Illustration 144. Alexander Calder, 1898-1976, U.S.A. *Lobster Trap and Fish Tail*, 1939. Hanging mobile 8'6" x 9'6". Museum of Modern Art, N.Y., N.Y. See *Sightlines* 9803. Photograph ©the Museum of Modern Art, New York. © Calder 1989/VIS\*ART Copyright Inc.

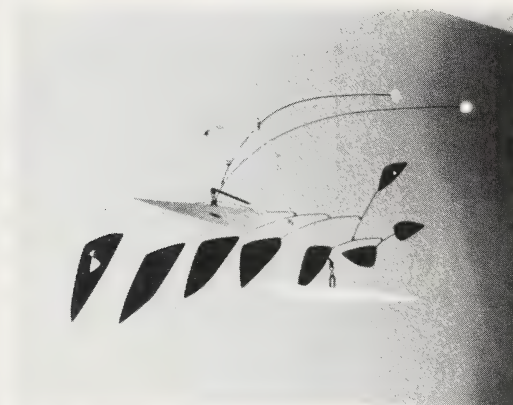


Illustration 145. Alexander Calder. *Two White Dots in the Air*, 1958. Length 8 feet 4 inches. Collection of Mr. and Mrs. J. Canton, IN. See *Sightlines* 9802. ©Calder 1989/VIS\*ART Copyright Inc.

These playful arrangements of floating shapes are carefully balanced on a single suspended wire.



5. Sketch the mobile *Lobster Trap and Fish Tail* and add several more shapes to the composition. Think about where could they be added. How will balance be maintained?

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6. Where in your community could the mobile, *Two White Dots in the Air*, be hung? Give your reasons why you chose this particular building and site for the mobile.

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Check your answer(s) by turning to the Appendix, Section 3: Activity 2.

### Activity 3: Op Art

Learn to recognize contemporary art styles. Freedom of expression is necessary for contemporary artworks.

Op artists produce optical effects that are both curious and intriguing. The Hungarian-born American artist, Victor Vasarely, composes his compositions with geometric shapes and brilliant colours. He achieves bulging or receding effects by changing the size and colour and the width of lines. Using this technique he creates moving illusions of space and depth.

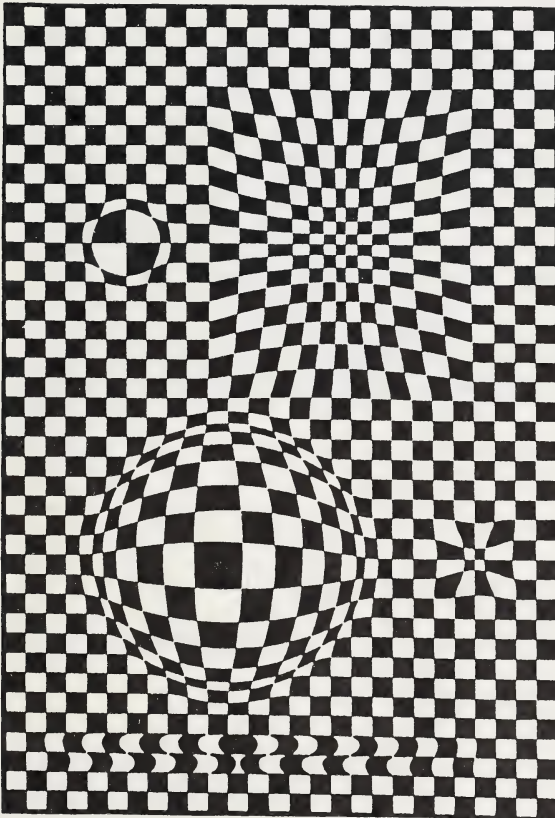


Illustration 146. Victor Vasarely, *Vega*, 1957, 77" × 57". Collection of the Artist. ©Vasarely 1989/VIS\*ART Copyright Inc.

**Op Art** is a style based on how we see works of art. Many contemporary artists began to experiment with visual illusions and scientific ideas to create the optical sensation of movement in compositions. Op Art must be carefully calculated and presented with craftsmanship. One shape out of place or one wrong line could ruin the whole effect.

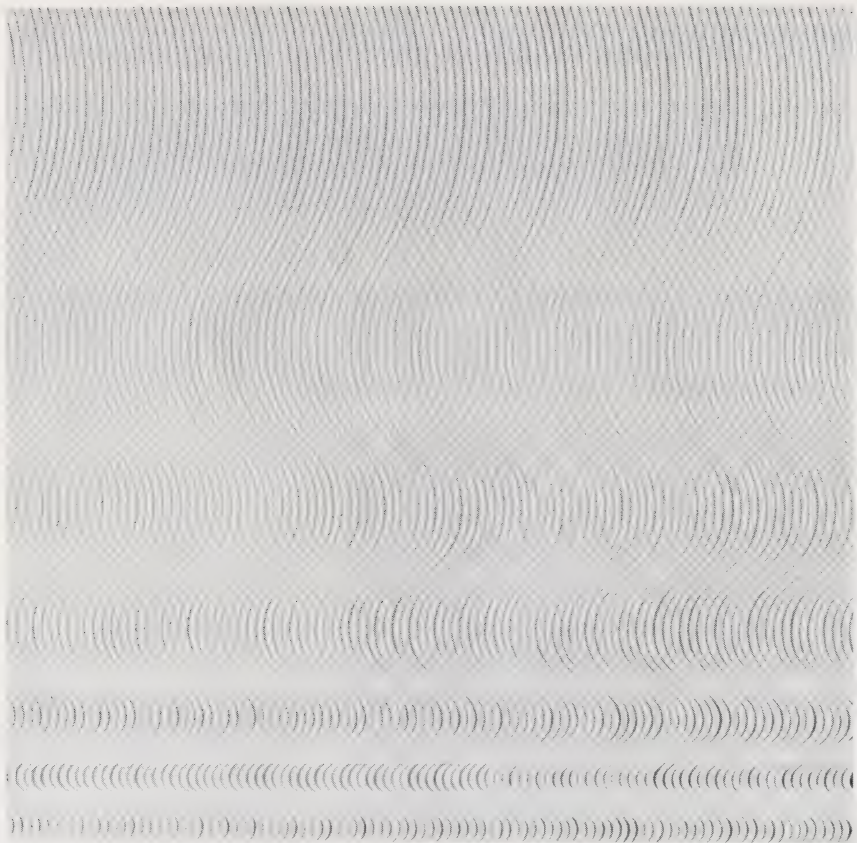


Illustration 147. Bridget Riley. *Fall*, 1963. Acrylic emulsion on hardboard, 141 × 141 cm. The Tate Gallery, London Art Resource.

Like Vasarely, Bridget Riley of England creates sensations of movements with lines.

This work can create some unusual effects. Quickly blink your eyes and see how the lines shift.

1. Do you find these artworks interesting? Explain why or why not.

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2. Which of these two works do you prefer? Explain why.

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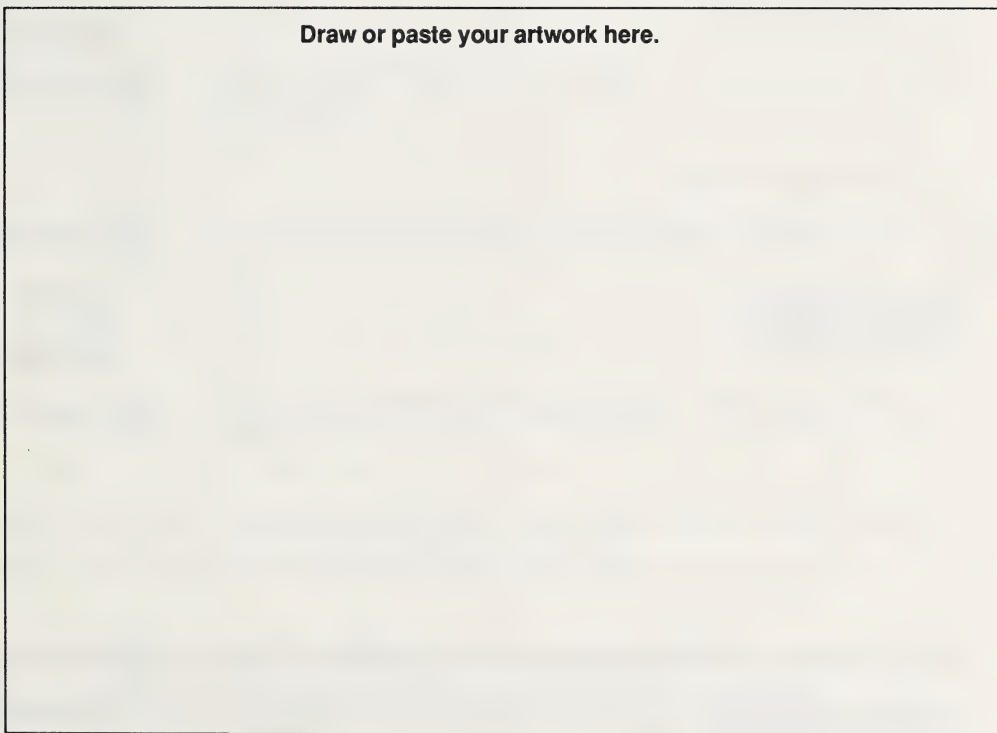
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3. Carefully study the line drawing by Bridget Riley. With a thin felt tip pen, create a line drawing composition where you create depth by placing some lines apart and some close together.

**Draw or paste your artwork here.**



Check your answer(s) by turning to the Appendix, Section 3: Activity 3.



Joseph Albers (1888-1976) immigrated to the United States from Germany in 1933. In America he taught for many years at Yale University. Albers was a disciple of Wilhelm Ostwald, a colour theorist who attempted to formulate a universal, scientifically sound, theory of colour harmony. Albers, influenced by Ostwald's work on colour relationships, explored the illusion of movement created by colour interactions.

Focussing mainly on square shapes he demonstrated how colours interact when placed next to each other.

Turn to picture 217, Joseph Albers, *Homage to the Square: Glow*, in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*.

This composition illustrates the format and composition of one of his experiments with colour interaction. Review Module 5, Section 2.

4. Answer the following questions in reference to Joseph Albers, *Homage to the Square: Glow*.

a. What colour comes forward?

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b. What colours recede?

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c. What other colours can you suggest for this work?

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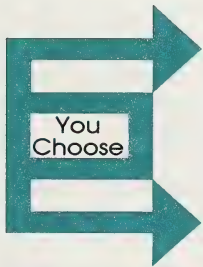
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Check your answer(s) by turning to the Appendix, Section 3: Activity 3.

## Activity 4: Colour Field Painting

Learn to recognize contemporary art styles. Freedom of expression is necessary for contemporary artworks.

The creation of large and flat colour compositions became a style that relied solely on colours often involving no other elements of art. American artist Mark Rothko's flat colour statement is an example of this contemporary style called **Colour Field Painting**.

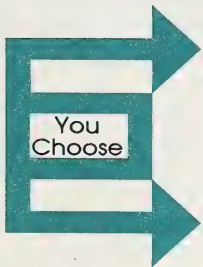


If you have access to the laserdisc *Sightlines*, find and view frame 11412.

OR



Turn to picture 111, Mark Rothko, *Yellow and Gold*, in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*.



If you have access to the laserdisc *Sightlines*, find and view frame 11410.

OR



Turn to picture 218, Mark Rothko, *Number 10*, in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*.

Now look at the works of another Colour Field painter, Frank Stella, also an American artist, who worked colours into interesting compositions of graphic line designs.



If you have access to the laserdisc *Sightlines*, find and view frame 9660.

OR



Turn to picture 216, Frank Stella, *Protractor*, in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*.

These works are very large, and the various colours are carefully selected to create the visual effects.

1. Why do we describe this work as graphic? Give reasons.

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2. Do you think the artist shaped the canvas effectively to suit the work? Explain.

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3. Do you think this work would be as effective in other colours? State your reasons.

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4. In the space provided, draw your first name in wide lines. Fill the line drawing in with colours that you feel will make the lines stand out.

Check your answer(s) by turning to the Appendix, Section 3: Activity 4.

## Activity 5: Social Realism and High or Photographic Realism

Learn to recognize contemporary art styles. Freedom of expression is necessary for contemporary artworks.

Interest in realistic representation had always remained in North America. During the 1930s, artists established two distinct styles called **Social Realism** and **High or Photographic Realism**. You will now take a closer look at these two styles.

### Social Realism

Social Realism has its modern roots in the work of artists of the Barbizon school: Courbet, Monet, and Daumier. Social Realism was based on social values and political themes. Such themes were very common during the Great Depression (1930s) when millions of people were unemployed and poverty was widespread. Artists like George Tooker painted scenes which showed the plight of the jobless and the homeless. Artists painted the noise and crowded conditions of cities, lines of people at soup kitchens, and the alienation of urban people.

Study picture 220, George Tooker, *Government Bureau*, in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*.

1. What social condition has George Tooker communicated in the painting, *Government Bureau*?

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2. By giving examples, describe how he has accomplished this.

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3. What mood is created in the painting?

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4. How has the artist communicated this mood? Explain using examples of design elements and principles from the work.

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Check your answer(s) by turning to the Appendix, Section 3: Activity 5.

### High or Photographic Realism

Even though High or Photographic Realism art shares a common approach to painting, the variation of artist's themes and subject matters are many. In contemporary High Realism, the artist enables us to experience visually a realistic situation. These works are generally created with a high degree of accuracy and carefulness in painting craftsmanship. Artists bring to these subjects a very personal vision, style, and technique.

The Canadian painter, Ken Danby, painted a scene you probably have seen many times at a hockey game or on television. Much like a camera, he has captured a moment in time. You can almost feel that a puck is going to be aimed at the net goalie.

Turn to picture 219, Ken Danby, *At the Crease*, in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*.

Following is another High Realism painting, this time by the Canadian artist Christopher Pratt. He illustrates a very familiar scene in a very quiet and highly organized composition.



If you have access to the laserdisc *Sightlines*, find and view frame 15294.

OR



Turn to picture 87, Christopher Pratt, *Institution*, in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*.

In Pratt's work, the environment is painted so carefully that it seems almost unreal, for no details or textures are shown. The mood is very different from the Ken Danby work.

5. Study the paintings by Danby and Pratt. Note their similarities and differences in terms of the elements listed in the chart which follows.

	KEN DANBY	CHRISTOPHER PRATT
POINT OF VIEW	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
SUBJECT MATTER	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
STYLE	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
ELEMENTS OF DESIGN	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____

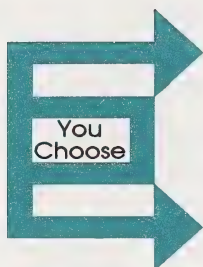
Check your answer(s) by turning to the Appendix, Section 3: Activity 5.

## Activity 6: Installation Art

Learn to recognize contemporary art styles. Freedom of expression is necessary for contemporary artwork. Understand the impact of technology in the creation of contemporary art forms.

**Installation Art** is a form of art that creates its own environment. All the forms created or chosen by the artist contribute to the overall arranged effect of the work.

Generally, these works are assembled, are taken down, and are rearranged again. George Segal creates not only unusual white life-size plaster figures, but also places them in a complete setting.



If you have access to the laserdisc *Sightlines*, find and view frame 12351.

OR



Turn to picture 221, George Segal, *The Gas Station*, in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*.



If you have access to the laserdisc *Sightlines*, find and view frame 11924.

OR



Turn to picture 222, George Segal, *Man on Scaffold*, in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*.

1. In these artworks by George Segal, the artist has extended the definition of what a sculpture is by including an environment as part of the piece. How do you think he has accomplished this? Provide examples from the two works.

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2. What feelings or emotions is the artist trying to convey?

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3. How are these works different from traditional figure sculptures?

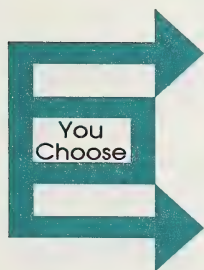
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Check your answer(s) by turning to the Appendix, Section 3: Activity 6.

Judy Chicago created a large, symbolic, and historic dinner party setting to honour those great women from history who made positive contributions to humanity. While some of these women were famous, others did not receive any recognition for their achievements during their own lifetimes. The installation totals thirty-nine settings and materials include ceramics, stitched cloth, glass and metal design, and china painting. The raised platform of white lustre triangular tiles is crisscrossed by 999 golden scripted names of heroic women from the ancient world to the present.



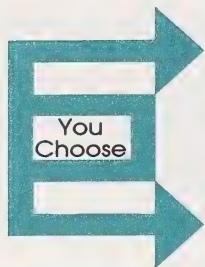
If you have access to the laserdisc *Sightlines*, find and view frame 9814.

OR



Turn to picture 224, Judy Chicago, *The Dinner Party – Installation View 1*, in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*.





If you have access to the laserdisc *Sightlines*, find and view frame 11605.

OR



Turn to picture 223, Judy Chicago, *The Dinner Party – Installation View 2*, in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*.



If you have access to the laserdisc *Sightlines*, find and view frame 11629.

OR



Turn to picture 127, Judy Chicago, *The Dinner Party – Hypatia*, in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*.

4. Is this not the most unusual dinner party setting you have ever seen? Describe your reaction to the installation.

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5. What other dinner party settings can you suggest to honour a group of people? Be sure to specify the group.

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6. What conclusions can you draw from these two contemporary art installations about the freedom of expression for artists?

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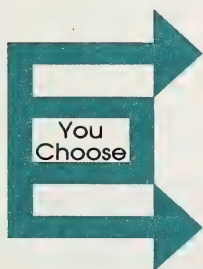
Check your answer(s) by turning to the Appendix, Section 3: Activity 6.

## Follow-Up Activities

If you had difficulty understanding the concepts in the activities of this section, it is recommended that you do the Extra Help. If you have a clear understanding of the concepts it is recommended that you do the Enrichment.

### Extra Help

You may have a fairly clear understanding of what kind of art you like. Do you make up your mind right away when you see a contemporary artwork? Look again at the sculptures of Claes Oldenburg.

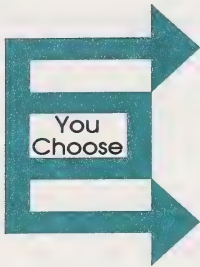


If you have access to the laserdisc *Sightlines*, find and view frame 12278.

OR



Turn to picture 135, Claes Oldenburg, *Giant Hamburger*, in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*.

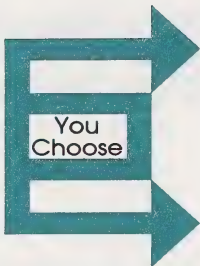


If you have access to the laserdisc *Sightlines*, find and view frame 11833.

OR



Turn to picture 137, Claes Oldenburg, *Soft Toilet*, in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*.



If you have access to the laserdisc *Sightlines*, find and view frame 9935.

OR



Turn to picture 139, Claes Oldenburg, *Giant Blue Shirt with Brown Tie*, in your *Art 11 Booklet of Reproductions*.

These soft sculptures are very large and are created with painted soft canvas.

Select one of these sculptures for your response to the following questions.

Sculpture chosen: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Describe your first reaction with a list of words.

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2. Now look at the work and analyse it on the basis of form, style, position, colour, and subject matter.

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3. When you have finished, examine your first reaction to this sculpture. What words do you wish to change and why?

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4. Why did the artist create this kind of sculpture?

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Check your answer(s) by turning to the Appendix, Section 3: Extra Help.



## Enrichment

Here are two sculptures that represent a standing male figure: *St. George*, by the sculptor Donato Donatello created in 1417, and *Man with a Guitar* created by Jacques Lipchitz in 1915.



Illustration 148. Donatello, *St. George*, c. 1417, Marble, 6'8 1/4" (2.04 m). Museo Nazionale, Florence. Nimatallah/ART Resource.

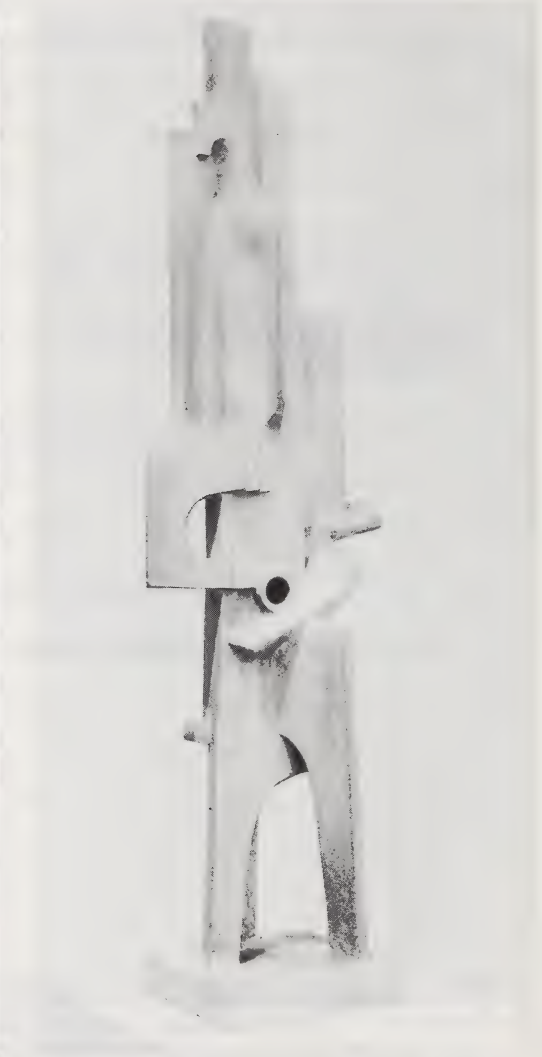


Illustration 149. Jacques Lipchitz. *Man with a Guitar*, 1915, Stone, 38 1/4" (97 cm). Museum of Modern Art, New York (Mrs. Simon Guggenheim Fund). Photograph © The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

1. Carefully study the two sculptures, *St. George* and *Man With a Guitar*, and explain why they differ in style even though both were created by artists for our western civilization.

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2. Which of these two works is a contemporary artwork?

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Check your answer(s) by turning to the Appendix, Section 3: Enrichment.

## Conclusion

Contemporary art styles cover a wide range of symbols and expressions. Some painters and sculptors use traditional images and designs; some use the myths and symbols of native people to express their ideas; others use complex new technologies to make art.

Although art reflects many different styles and purposes, all art has some meaning. Learning about the many different meanings of contemporary images will help you to understand and to appreciate the power of artworks.

## Module Summary

In this module you learned to analyse and to understand your personal response to works of art. You learned to interpret meaning and to make some critical judgements about art by applying your knowledge of principles of design, of artist's styles and purposes, and of the special symbols and materials used by contemporary artists.


Although the power of art resides in the image, you learn to appreciate and to explain that power as you learn to use your knowledge of art to search for meaning in images.

An icon representing an assignment booklet, showing a rectangular shape with a smaller rectangle inside, and the text "Assignment Booklet" written inside.

Assignment  
Booklet

Turn to your Assignment Booklet and do the assignment(s) for this section.

# Appendix

	<b>Activities</b>
	<b>Follow-Up Activities</b>





## Section 1: Activity 1

Responses to questions 1, 2, 3, and 4 will be personal, answers will vary.

5. Yes. It is possible to dislike a work because it is unfamiliar, the subject seems strange, you have no association with the subject, you do not care for the colours, you do not understand what the work is about.

You can judge the work to be good art even though you dislike it by applying your knowledge of the elements and principles of design to the work in order to decide whether or not the artist has been successful in organizing and presenting the image.

## Section 1: Activity 2

1. Images will be personal, the following are some possibilities:

- growing
- opening
- budding
- expanding
- enlarging
- revealing new details

2. Details you can see include the following:

- Variety of shapes: circles, oval, triangles, dots, rectangles, organic or free-flowing shapes
- Variety of lines: horizontal, diagonal, vertical, curved, thick, thin
- Variety of textures: smooth, rough

3. Response will be personal, answers will vary.
4. Answers will vary. Make sure you make specific reference to details in the work and that you apply your knowledge of the elements and principles of design you learned in previous modules.

## Section 1: Activity 3

1. Answers will vary, students should give reasons for their response.
2. Answers will vary.
3. Your answer should include specific reference to lines, shapes, colours, textures; to balance, harmony, rhythm, movement, dominance, pattern, etc.

## Section 1: Follow-Up Activities

### Extra Help

1. Answers will vary but could include the following:
  - a.
    - dark brownish background
    - round yellow shape
    - round shape of bottle top
    - orange panels of bottle side
    - triangle shapes for reflections in the bottle
  - b.
    - two sketched rectangles
    - blue-brown horizontal shapes
    - curved lines
    - diagonal lines
    - some darker shadow shapes
2. John Hall made *Perfume Bottle* mysterious by choosing an unusual point of view.
3. Answer will vary but might include
  - The artist interprets land forms as rhythmic horizontal shapes.
  - The artist interprets landscape as softly moulded horizontal forms.
  - The artist interprets landscape as simple shapes and lines.
4. Responses will be personal, answers will vary.

### Enrichment

1. Responses will be personal, answers will vary.
2. Answers will vary.
3. This artist, Derek Besant, takes close-up details of everyday ordinary things such as corners of rooms, escalators, or windows, chooses an unusual point of view and makes these things mysterious.
4. The title is used as a symbol because the painting does not give us information about a white door, but suggests instead a mysterious inside space.

## Section 2: Activity 1

All responses in Activity 1 will be personal. Answers will vary depending on the choice of artwork and on personal experiences.

## Section 2: Activity 2

1.
  - a. No. People cannot float in space. Chagall might be telling us about the close relationship between two people.
  - b. Yes, the title helps to focus on the special experience the artist is interpreting. The clues might be
    - floating figures
    - the faces coming together as if to kiss
    - the bright flowers
    - the details of the room suggesting a meal and sharing
  - c. You may answer “yes” or “no.” In either case your answer should be supported with specific details from the painting.
2. Answers will vary.
3. Answers will vary. The following is a possibility: I think both are the real Frida. The figures show two parts of a personality.
4.
  - a. The “Tree of Hope” seems to be Frida’s idea of herself. Her strength seems to come from within the figure on the right.
  - b. “Tree of Hope, Stand Firm” may mean to have courage, be strong.
5.
  - a. A viewer can respond sympathetically to Frida Kahlo’s work. Each viewer will have a different experience depending on the viewer’s background.
  - b. Answers will vary.

## Section 2: Activity 3

1. The following are some common responses to what these birds symbolize:
  - a. The dove symbolizes peace.
  - b. The hawk symbolizes war.
  - c. The blue jay symbolizes happiness.
  - d. The peacock symbolizes pride.
  - e. The raven symbolizes death.
  - f. The eagle symbolizes power.
  - g. The rooster symbolizes dawn/new life.
  - h. The bluebird symbolizes happiness.
  - i. The loon symbolizes a mood, the land, fishing.
  - j. The dodo symbolizes extinction.
2. Answers will vary depending on birds chosen and personal experience.



### 3. Characteristics suggested include

- large wings
- strong beaks
- sharp eye
- powerful claws

4. The Florence Davidson, Haida Ceremonial Blanket represents the raven as the Transformer. The magical power seems to be in the design of the eye, beak, wings, and feet.
5. The Raven Screen shows the bird in many different forms and activities: flying, turning, landing, hopping. These shapes suggest the raven is tricky, clever, and active.
6. Drawings will vary. Compare your composition to the Raven Screen.
7. The style is more realistic than abstract because the image has to be easily identified by many people. The realistic image increases the power of the artwork because everyone can recognize the shape.

## Section 2: Activity 4

1. Artworks would be better cared for in the National Gallery of Canada than in a coffee shop or bus depot.
2. a. Art is collected by the National Gallery of Canada
  - to make art available to the people of Canada
  - to preserve artworks
  - to display artworks to their best advantage
  - to provide a collection of Canadian art from many periods and provinces
  - to provide representative artworks from all groups of artists.

The works are on display for visitors to the Gallery, so people from all over the world can visit the collections.

- b. Someone working at the bus depot might put up a collection of artworks
  - to attract customers
  - to provide decoration
  - to make the depot attractive

The people who use the bus depot see the works.

- c. Yes, there would be differences. The art in the National Gallery would show many different kinds and periods of art; art in the bus depot would likely be popular, realistic work.

3. The bus depot could
  - keep the works clean
  - preserve works on paper under glass
  - avoid hanging works in direct sunlight
4. Some possible reasons for restoration might be
  - to restore the colours
  - to make the work look new
  - to make the work look as the artist intended
  - to repair the stucco surface so no traces of vandalism remain
5. Your conclusion will be personal. Reasons for restoration have been listed in the previous answer. Some possible reasons against restoration might be
  - to keep the record of changes over time
  - to keep the record of decay as part of the history of the piece

## Section 2: Follow-Up Activities

### Extra Help

1. a, b, c. Answers will vary depending on personal experiences.
2. a. Sound and actions suggested include
  - sounds of horses' hoofs
  - movement of horses
  - snorts of horses
- b. Design elements and principles used include
  - curving and diagonal lines
  - organic shapes
  - hard and soft edges
  - overlapping
  - repetition of shape to create the illusion of movement
- c. Answers will vary. The larger painting will show more detail than the small reproduction. The small reproduction will not convey the same feeling of power as does the large original.

### Enrichment

All answers to questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 will vary, they depend on personal experience and interpretation. Be sure to include specific reference to actual details in the work.

### Section 3: Activity 1

1. A textured or raised surface has been created.

2. Some possible responses are

- loose handling of paint
- loose flowing lines
- free-flowing paint
- swift lines
- small broken shapes

3. Unity is created by

- similar brush or knife strokes
- patterns of lines and shapes
- colour selection

4. Some possible responses are

- no recognizable image
- no realistic sense of space
- no shapes that suggest real objects
- free use of color

### Section 3: Activity 2

1. Answers will vary. Possibilities include

- oil cans
- detergent boxes
- flour/sugar bags
- coffee jars
- jam bottles

2. Possible answers might be, these artists

- were interested in a new subject matter
- wanted to use subjects from twentieth century culture
- were influenced by industrial design

3. The painting title *Masterpiece* refers to a great work of art. Connecting *Masterpiece* to a comic strip is a way of making fun of serious art.

4. Responses will be personal. Be sure to give reasons.

5. Sketches will vary. Make sure you pay close attention to balance.

6. Choices will be personal, but should be defensible.

### Section 3: Activity 3

1. Answers will vary, but should include the response that optical illusions are visually intriguing.
2. Choices will be personal. Be sure to give an explanation.
3. Drawings will vary. Be sure to check your work to see that the direction of the lines changes slightly to create the optical illusion of movement.
4.
  - a. The yellow comes forward.
  - b. The oranges and the red recede.
  - c. Perhaps yellow-green, green and blue. You may have noticed that red, yellow and orange are analogous harmonies so that any three colours side by side on the colour wheel will work.

### Section 3: Activity 4

1. Graphics sometimes means "sharply outlined." This work is outlined with sharp white lines and the colours are then filled in.
2. Yes. The name of the piece refers to a protractor which has this semi-circular shape.
3. No. The artist chose intense complementary harmony of blue and orange balanced by softer or lower intensities of the same colours.
4. This is experimental drawing, responses will vary.

### Section 3: Activity 5

1. The artist communicated the impersonal atmosphere of dealing with government offices.
2. The following are possible examples:
  - The people standing in line all seem similar.
  - The faces of individuals are not shown.
  - The officials are all behind glass.
  - The officials have no faces.
  - Only very large eyes show through the hole in the box-like offices.
  - Hands are on computer-like instruments.
  - The space is tightly closed.
3. The mood is one of powerlessness or hopelessness.
4. The artist communicated this mood by using the following design elements:
  - The figures are vertical and still.
  - The staring eyes make a pattern.
  - The repetition of boxes and light makes a closed space.



5.

	KEN DANBY	CHRISTOPHER PRATT
POINT OF VIEW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• close-up</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• close-up and distant</li> </ul>
SUBJECT MATTER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• goalie</li> <li>• hockey player</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• building</li> </ul>
STYLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• realistic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• realistic but abstract in feeling because of clear patterns</li> </ul>
ELEMENTS OF DESIGN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• vertical, horizontal and diagonal lines</li> <li>• textured ice</li> <li>• rectangular and organic shapes</li> <li>• realistic colours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• vertical and horizontal lines</li> <li>• rectangular shapes</li> <li>• blues and brown</li> </ul>
PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• centre of interest: mask</li> <li>• shallow space: pattern and repetition in mask, pads, nets</li> <li>• textured surface</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• centre of interest: space</li> <li>• pattern in windows</li> <li>• flat surface</li> </ul>

### Section 3: Activity 6

1. The artist has set life-size figures in an actual built environment. In the first, *Gas Station*, the coke machine and tire are real objects. In the second, *Man on Scaffold*, the scaffold is real.
2. The artist is communicating the feeling that the environment and the objects are real and permanent. The ghostly white figures seem less real.
3. In traditional figure sculpture, the emphasis is on the figure that is done in detail. No environment is created.
4. Answers will vary. Your reaction will be clear to you if you imagine yourself seated at this table as a guest.

5. Answers will vary, some possibilities are graduation dinner, sports hall of fame, great scientists, unsung heroes, and so on.
6. Answers will vary. You should make the point that artists today enjoy unlimited freedom of imagination and have a wealth of materials to choose from.

## Follow-Up Activities

### Extra Help

1. Reactions will be personal, the following are possibilities:
  - amused
  - puzzled
  - interested
  - intrigued
  - attracted
  - amazed
  - entertained
  - challenged
  - involved
  - curious

Answers to questions 2 and 3 will vary. Be sure you refer directly to the work you chose.

4. Oldenburg probably created these giant soft sculptures to make viewers look at ordinary objects in new and different ways.

### Enrichment

1. The sculptures differ in style because they were created in different centuries, for different reasons, and by artists who belonged to entirely different cultures.
2. The *Man with a Guitar* is the contemporary work.









L.R.D.C.  
Producer

Art 11

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